

29
The LOVE of our COUNTRY:
O R,
*A sincere and hearty Concern for our present happy
Constitution in Church and State.*

Recommended in a ^{4473 E 3} 36

SERMON

Preach'd at

St. Mary's in Nottingham,

March the 17th. 1716-7.

At the *ASSIZES* held there.

By *SAMUEL BERDMORE*, M. A. Vicar
of the said Church. 18

Publish'd at the Request of the *High Sberiff*, and
the *Gentlemen of the Grand Jury*.

NOTTINGHAM:

Printed and Sold by *William Ward*, near the
White Lyon, on the *Long Row*; and by *T. Varnham*
and *J. Osborn* in *Lombard-street*, London. 1717.

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To the Right Worshipful

Joseph Mellish, Esq;

High Sheriff of the County of Nottingham,

A N D T O

Sir Thomas Parkins, Bart.

Julius Hutchinson, *Esq;*
Mundy Musters. *Esq;*
Christ. Rolleston, *Esq;*
William Firth, *Esq;*
Jonathan Acklam, *Esq;*
John Grundy, *Esq;*
Thomas Brailsford, *Esq;*

Mr. Richard Porter.
Mr. John Story,
Mr. Thomas Trigg,
Mr. Charles Hacker,
Mr. William Farrow,
Mr. John Walker,
Mr. Thomas Turnhill.

Gentlemen of the *GRAND JURY.*

T H I S

S E R M O N,

Publish'd at their Request,

Is most humbly Dedicated.

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Published at their Request.

S E R M O N

T H I S

Gentlemen of the GRAND JURY

Mr. Thomas Turnhill,	John Grundy, Esq;	Jonathan Ackland, Esq;	William Trench, Esq;	Christ. Rolleston, Esq;	Mundy Musters, Esq;	Julius Hutchinson, Esq;
Mr. John Walker,	Mr. William Farrow,	Mr. Charles Hacker,	Mr. Thomas Trigg,	Mr. John Story,	Mr. Richard Porter,	

Sir Thomas Parkin, Bart.

A N D T O

High Sheriff of the County of Nottingham

Joseph Mellish, Esq;

To the Right Worshipful



PSALM cxxii. 8, 9.

*For my Brethren and Companions sake, I will
now say, Peace be within thee.
Because of the House of the Lord thy God, I
will seek thy good.*

THIS Psalm is generally ascrib'd to David for its Author; and by the Scope of it we may Conjecture that it was design'd for the Use of the People, to be Sung by them, when they went up to *Jerusalem to the solemn Feasts*. I shall not here trouble you with a more strict Enquiry at what Time, or upon what particular Occasion it was penn'd; the Subject of it is very plain and instructive.

The Royal Author reflecting upon the happy and flourishing State of *Jerusalem*, breaks out into the most affectionate Expressions of Joy; and declares his most hearty Concern for the Continuance and Preservation of it; by praying

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for

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for it's Peace and Prosperity, and inciting
others to join with him in the same Religious
Exercise.

Jerusalem was at that Time the Place of God's
more publick and solemn Worship; For thither
the Tribes went up thrice in the Year by God's
appointment, to testify unto Israel, to give thanks
to the Name of the Lord, v. 4. And there too were
set the Thrones of Judgment, the Thrones of the
House of David, v. 5, that is, The imperi-
al Seat, the Palace of the King, and the Place
for the publick Administration of Justice; by
which is plainly signify'd it's Religious and
Civil Advantages; And upon both these Ac-
counts holy *David* expresses so passionate a
Concern and Affection for *Jerusalem*. For my
Brethren and Companions sake, that is, for the
sake of my Country, and for the general good
of others, who share with me in these Blessings,
I will say Peace be within thee; because of the
House of the Lord our God, that is, for the sake
of that holy Religion, and that Church that is
there establish'd, I will seek thy good.

What *Jerusalem* was at that Time to the
Jews, the same is any Place or Country where
the like Priviledges are enjoy'd. I shall there-
fore take Occasion from the Example before us,
to shew;

First, How much it is every Man's Concern
and Duty to wish and to seek the good of
his Country, the happiness of that Communi-
ty to which he belongs.

Secondly,

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Secondly, What peculiar Engagements we of this Nation are under to do so.

Thirdly, I shall beg leave to point out such Means as may be most Conducive to this good End, chiefly with respect to the present State of our Nation.

And in treating of these Particulars I shall have no other View, than to do the Duty I would recommend to others, that is, to endeavour to do our Country what Service we can in our several Stations; to which as we of our *Profession* are oblig'd in common with the rest of our fellow Subjects; so have we peculiar Obligations upon us, *because of the House of the Lord our God*, and the Priviledges and Favours enjoy'd by the Church, of which we are Ministers.

First then, The Example of my Text instructs us how much it is every Mans Concern and Duty to wish and to seek the good of his Country; for this was not a peculiar Case either with respect to *David* or to *Jerusalem*. Every other Nation or Country is entitled to the Affection of it's People; All Men are interested in the good of the Community to which they belong, and are therefore oblig'd to do what they can to promote it. *David* indeed was a King, and upon that Account his Example may seem not to affect private People, and it is true that it does not in the same Degree; there's no doubt but his Obligations

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to the Publick were the greater, as he was *ordain'd by God* to this End; to take care of the People committed to his Charge, and to promote the Welfare of his Kingdoms; And so is every one that is invested with the like Authority. They are *the Ministers of God for the good* of their Subjects; They are, as it were, the Fathers of their People, and stand in the Place of God, the common Father of Mankind; and must be answerable to him, who is the *King of Kings*, if they neglect or abuse their Trust.

And this is in some Measure true of all other subordinate *Magistrates* and Persons in Authority; their Duty rises in proportion to the Charge that is committed to them. The higher Mens Stations are, and the greater their Abilities to serve their Country; the more is due from them, and the guilt of their Neglect the more heinous.

When Men take upon them publick Offices without any regard to the publick Good; when they do it onely to gratify their own Ambition, or to serve their own Interest, or to carry on the Designs of Party and Faction, or for any other such Mercenary Ends; it is a high Breach of their Trust; It is a great Offence against God whose Authority they abuse, and 'tis the basest Treachery to their Country; and tho' they may be artful enough to evade the Justice of Men; yet there is an Account to be given at another Tribunal, where Vengeance will be sure to meet the Guilty; and where

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where the Judge is neither to be corrupted nor deceiv'd.

But tho' this Duty does principally concern those that are in Authority, yet it is not peculiar to them; Every Man shares in the Blessings of the Publick, and therefore is indebted to it for what Help and Assistance they can give it; And there are many Opportunities that Men in private Stations may have for the Exercise of this Duty. They may ease their Governours of a great deal of Trouble, by their chearful and ready Obedience; They may become useful Members of their Country, by shewing themselves Examples of Submission and Respect to their Superiors, and by endeavouring as far as they can to persuade others to the same Temper; We see how much it is in the Power of every inferior Man to raise Jealousies and Discontents against their Governours; and if Others would take the same pains to correct this predominant Vice, which is so Mischievous to our Peace, and so great a Reproach to our Nation; there are very few so inconsiderable, but it may be in their Power to do the Publick some Service this way.

Thus again, It is incumbent upon all sorts of People to give their Country their utmost Assistance in Times of Danger, by chearfully contributing to those Payments which the Necessity of Affairs require of us, for the Support of those who are willing to venture their Lives in the Service of the Publick; and by being ready to do so our selves whenever the good of
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our Country calls us to it. In a Word, all Men have it in their Power to promote the publick Good some way or other; and they that can do nothing else, can't want the Power of performing one Part of the *Psalmist's* Devotion to his Country, that is, *praying for it's Peace and Prosperity*; In such Ways as these we may be all Instruments of the publick Welfare; and this is every Man's Duty; 'Tis a Duty that Nature dictates, and Religion strongly enforces, by all those Principles of *Love* and *Gratitude*, of *Charity* and *Benevolence* which we learn from both: For tho' Charity teaches us to extend our Benevolence to the whole World, to all Mankind without Exception, yet it allows us to indulge our Nature so far as to give the Preference to those that are nearest to us either in Religion or any other Relation; and most certainly our native Country does upon many Accounts demand this of us. The common Benefits that it affords us bespeak our Gratitude; Our own Interest as well as that of our Friends and Acquaintance, which must necessarily be involv'd in that of the Publick, are strong Motives to engage our Affection. This was one Consideration that *Holy David* mentions; *For my Brethren and Companions sake, I will wish thee Prosperity*: For indeed it can hardly happen that a Country can suffer any great distress, but that it must affect every one some way or other, if not in our own Persons or Estates; yet in some of our Friends. Tho' we our selves should Escape the common Calamity,

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Calamity, yet our Parents or our Children, our Brethren or Acquaintance may fall under it; and a good-natur'd Man must have a fellow-feeling in whatever befalls his Friends, and can't but share in their Misfortunes; so that Self-Interest and common Humanity sufficiently instruct us in this Duty of seeking the publick Good.

And this the *Heathens* themselves were so sensible of, that they could think of no fitter Name to express doing a Mischief to their Country, than *Paricide*, as if they lookt upon it of equal Guilt with murdering their Parents, or destroying themselves.

It was to the Glory of antient *Rome*, and what contributed most to it's Grandeur, that a Traytor to their Country was a Monster that rarely appear'd among them; and when he did, never escap'd the severest Punishment; And indeed their History affords many noble Examples of this Virtue, of the most brave and generous Concern for the publick Good; It abounds with Instances of Men sacrificing their Estates, their Children and their Lives to their Countries Glory; and it is observable by the way, that so long as this brave Spirit prevail'd, they conquer'd wherever they came; but when among other Degeneracies, this Virtue decay'd, and they began to postpone the publick Good to private and little Views; when Avarice and Ambition, Pride and Envy began to mix with their publick Counsels; when they fell into Parties and
Factions

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Factions among themselves, and their Contention was for Superiority more than for their Countries honour; they then soon declin'd, and became as Contemptible as they had before been Glorious. They were insulted by the meanest of their Neighbours, and at last became a Prey to the *Goths* and *Vandals*, and others of the basest and most barbarous Nations upon Earth; a perpetual warning to all succeeding Generations, that the greatest Nations, and the most flourishing and powerful Kingdoms when thus divided against themselves cannot stand. I pray God avert any such Judgment from us; To this End:

I shall proceed in the second Place to shew what peculiar Engagements we of this Nation are under to seek and to endeavour the good of our Country; which I shall labour to inforce from these two Considerations

1st, From the happy State of our Land, and 2^{dly}, from the Dangers that at present threaten our Happiness. The one methinks should not fail to engage our Affections, and the other to animate our most hearty Zeal.

1st then, Let us take a View of the happy State of our Land; happy above most other Nations, and perhaps it would not be too extravagant a Fondness to say, when all Circumstances are consider'd, beyond any People in the World: *Our Lot is fallen to us in a fair Ground, blest with Plenty of all good Things.* We are happy in our Situation, our Climate, and
our

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Our Air ; all Ministring to our Ease, our Health and Safety ; and to these natural Advantages, God has added this further Blessing, that neither Plague nor Famine, which have been more or less in all Countries about us, have visited our Land ; the former not for above fifty Years, and the latter not for some Ages past ; so that in these respects we may be justly call'd the *fortunate Island* ; and so we are esteem'd by most other Nations, how senseless soever some among our selves are of these Blessings.

But the *Context* will lead me to other Instances of our Happiness, with respect to our Civil and Religious Enjoyments. Both these the *Royal Psalmist* mentions as the Cause of his affectionate Concern for *Jerusalem* ; because there was the *Throne of Judgment* and the *House of God* ; by the one implying their Civil Advantages in the righteous Administration of Justice, and by the other, the flourishing Estate of Religion ; and in both these Respects our Engagements to the love of our Country are at least as great, with this Advantage, that neither the *Throne of Judgment*, nor the *House of God* is confin'd to any one City, but the Benefits of both are diffus'd throughout our whole Land : And we see our Happiness in this respect in the present Assembly, which shows us that we are not oblig'd, as the *Jews* were, to take tedious Journeys for Opportunities either to Worship God, or to seek for Justice from his *Vicegerents*.

As to our Civil Advantages ; It must be
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own'd that *Liberty* and *Property* are the greatest that belong to humane Society; and these we enjoy to as great Perfection as any People upon Earth. The Temper of our Government, and the Wisdom and Justice of our Laws are as much our Security against all Violence and Oppression, as any humane Constitution can be; None but must be liable to some Inconveniencies or Abuse, which the wisest Laws can't wholly provide against, and which the domestick Enemies of our Constitution are always ready to expose; but the Happiness of ours will best appear by comparing it with that of our Neighbours, where other Methods of Government are establish'd; where the Poverty and Slavery of the People in most of them do loudly proclaim the Difference.

While our Prince is possess'd of all the Power that is necessary to the Happiness and Grandeur of the greatest Monarch upon Earth; it is the most considerable Part of his Glory that he Governs a free People; free, not to act without Controul, but under the restraint of good Laws; so far Free and at Liberty as reasonable Creatures would wish to be; and so far onely restrain'd as is necessary for the Peace and Good of Society.

What we get by honest Labour, or by any other lawful Means we can call our own; and the meanest Subject has redress by our Laws from the least Invasion of his Right, by what Hand soever it is attempted; and if they don't
always

always find it, it is not the Fault of our Constitution, but the Corruption of it ; which the best Government while it is in the Hands of Men, must be liable to.

But I forbear enlarging upon a Subject so much better understood by many in this Auditory, and shall proceed to what's more suitable to our Profession ; to lay before you our Religious Advantages, which I can with more Assurance affirm to be above any Nation in the World. When we look round about us, and consider how great a Part of the World is overspread with Ignorance of the true God ; Strangers to the Covenant of the Gospel ; and what a great Part of the Christian World is corrupted with Idolatry and Superstition ; How must we value our Happiness in enjoying the glorious Light of the Gospel, and a Religion freed from all the gross Idolatries of the Heathen World, and from the insupportable Yoke of Popish Superstition. It is our Felicity to be Members of a *Church* reform'd with so much Wisdom and Moderation ; purg'd from the Errors of Popery, and yet retaining all the *Beauty of Holiness*, and the Ornaments of *Decency and Order* : A *Church* built upon the onely true Foundation of *Christ* and his *Apostles* : A *Church* that has no Doctrines but what are fetcht from the pure Fountain of God's Word ; No Sacraments but what were ordain'd by *Christ* himself. A *Church* whose Discipline is modell'd according to the Apostolical and Primitive Pattern, and in which the Worship of

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God is freed from the Extremes of Superstition on the one hand and Disorder on the other ; and it is our further Advantage that we live in a Nation where the *true Religion* is not only known and profess'd, but *establisht* by *Authority* ; and has the Countenance and Favour of the *Civil Power*. I would to God that every Member of our *Church* would study to approve himself worthy of the Protection and Favour that we do at present happily enjoy !

The Interests both of *Church and State* are so interwoven, that they can't subsist asunder, they must stand or fall together ; and the Strength of both is equally subservient to each others Security.

While we are taught to pay all due Deference to the Government we live under, we enjoy all the Power that is necessary for the Good and Welfare of our *Church*.

Some we know too well, think we have a great deal more than we should have ; but how much soever it may be the Object of the Envy or Derision of our Enemies ; blessed be God, we live under a Government that does protect and defend us in it ; and I may add, that in the greatest and most material Parts of it we derive our Charter from no less Authority than that of Christ and his Apostles.

While therefore we are thus quiet and easy in the Enjoyment of our holy Religion with all it's Rights and Priviledges ; it becomes us to *acknowledg it with all thankfulness*, and not arrogate to our selves Powers that do not belong to us,
and

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and which our *Church disclaims*; as They manifestly do who maintain an utter *independence of the Church upon the Civil Power*. This I can't but take Notice of, because it has been so warmly urg'd by too many rash Men among our selves, and propagated by others with Views apparently destructive both of our Church and State; and is at this time the Occasion of the most unnatural Schism that ever was in the Christian Church; built upon a Foundation unknown by our Ancestors; and never thought on but by some *Papists* at the Reformation: Namely, That the Civil Power has not Authority to defend it self; and to provide for it's Security by *depriving such Bishops or other Ministers from the Execution of their Office who refuse Allegiance and Submission to the Government*. A Notion inconsistent with all Government; and plainly repugnant to the Doctrines of the Church of *England*. It was upon quite another Principle that the Reformation was begun; The Civil Power did then exercise this Authority against the *Popish Bishops and Clergy*; and it was not found fault with by any but as it was an Invasion of the *Pope's* Supremacy, and an Infringement upon his mighty Jurisdiction. So indeed it was; and this might be a proper Argument for *Papists* to make use of, in order to support that Dominion and Tyranny which the *Pope* had usurp'd over all Christian Princes; but it is very surprizing to hear Protestants contending for an Opinion which the Church of *Rome* has always been so forward to urge against us, and which

which the first Reformers thought themselves so much concern'd to refute; and it must be own'd that such Men must be hard put to it to keep their Arguments from being turn'd with equal force against the Reformation. But they are willing enough perhaps to let this shift for it self, so they can but carry on their own darling Design, which is evidently in it's Consequences to destroy our Constitution both in Church and State.

And yet these are the Men that set up for the only true *Church of England*. How well they deserve this Character, we may judge by comparing their belov'd Notion with the Doctrine of our *Church*, as it is taught in her *Articles* and her *Canons*; in both which it is plainly declar'd that the King is *Supreme in all Causes as well Ecclesiastical as Civil*. Nor is this inconsistent with any Power that Christ has left to his Church: The Civil Authority does not in any thing interfere with the Offices that are peculiar to the Church; and this is very particularly explain'd in the 37th *Article*, which cautions that *none should understand the Power of preaching the Word or administering the Sacraments, to be given to Princes by the chief Government in all Causes being attributed to them*; but this Exception plainly supposes that their Power reaches to other Matters; and it would be very strange to imagine that it should not extend to such a Case, as is now under our Consideration; upon which the Safety of the Prince and the Security of the People does so much depend.

So

So that while we own our Church to be so far dependent upon the Civil Power as to be subject to it's Laws, and to owe Obedience to it in all Things that are not contrary to the Laws of God or inconsistent with the peculiar Powers that are committed to it by Christ; we allow no more than what our Church expressly does, and no more than what some of the greatest Advocates for the Churches Power have allow'd.

I shall Instance in one who will hardly be suspected of the contrary, and that is Arch-Bishop Laud, who in his Conference with Fisher the Jesuite, says, * *That the Command of the Apostle, to every Soul to be subject to the higher Power, by which, says he, is meant the Temporal Power, does with the Consent of the Fathers comprehend all without Exception, even the highest Bishop, and in spiritual Causes too, so the Foundation of Faith and good Manners be not shaken; and adds, That the Kings of Judah, and several Christian Emperors did not onely intermeddle in the Affairs of Religion, but also without Censure enact Laws about it. And in another † Place he has these remarkable Words, That the Opinion of Bishops being Jure Divino, takes nothing from the King's Right or Power over them, For tho', says he, our Office be from God and Christ immediately, yet we may not Exercise that Power either of Order or Jurisdiction. but as God has appointed us, that*

* Laud against Fisher, p. 205. Edit. London, 1639.

† His Speech in the Star Chamber, 1637.

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is, not in his Majesties or any Christian Kings Kingdom, but by and under the Power of the King given us so to do.

These are the very Words of this learned Prelate, which come up exactly to the Case of our present *Nonjurors*, and show how far they differ from this great Man, whose Authority in other Points they are fond enough of.

But it is not my purpose here to engage in this Controversy; however the Consideration of the Priviledges of the Church under the Government, would naturally lead one so far to rescue our Church from such a Reproach, as if we were for exalting our Power above the State, and claiming an absolute Independence: A very ill return for the Benefits we do enjoy!

In the Name of God let us contend earnestly for the Powers that do belong to us; but while we magnify our Office beyond Measure, we do but expose our Character to the Contempt and Scorn of those who hate us; but God forbid that the Extravagancies of some few among us, either in this or any thing else, should cast a Blemish upon our excellent Church.

Such then is the outward State of our Church, enjoying all it's Rights and Priviledges under the Security of good Laws, and under the Protection of a Prince, in whose Person and Royal Family we have as fair a Prospect of the Continuance of these Blessings as we have had ever since the Reformation.

But

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But amidst all ; It is not to be conceal'd how insensible some among us are of the Happiness that we live under. Whence is it that that we see so much Uneasiness and Dissatisfaction ? What restless and implacable Spirit has possess'd us that we hear so much Murmuring and Complaint ? Our Enemies have done this ; and so Successful have they been, as to be able to persuade Men even out of their Senses ; to apprehend Dangers without Reason ; and to fancy Grievances which they don't feel ; and which have no Foundation but in their own Imaginations. Every Act of the Government is made up by the Arts of crafty Men, to draw the People into a dislike ; even it's best Acts are vilify'd, and turn'd into Occasion of Reproach. A vigilant Concern for the Safety of the Kingdom against Rebellion, is call'd State Policy, and a design to Insnare us ; And the necessary Charge that attends such a Provision is made a Subject of loud Complaint ; A due Execution of Justice upon the most flagitious Rebels is call'd Cruelty, tho' mixt with such unparallel'd Mercy and Lenity as by some has been taxt with Remissness, and has perhaps given Encouragement to the like wicked Attempts again.

While our Church is protected and secur'd by the best Laws, while we have all the Assurance that can be given us that it shall continue so ; yet how are unwary Men made to believe that it's Ruin is drawing near ; and so easy are they to believe any thing that is sug-

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gested to the Prejudice of the Government, that they can be persuaded that *Bishops* and the *Clergy*, some of the best and greatest in the Nation for Learning and Piety, are in the Plot to destroy their own Order. One while they are call'd Selfish and Mercenary, and in the same Breath they shall be branded with Designs to betray the Church, and thereby let in others to share with them in their Interests and Preferments. Strange Inconsistency! But what is too absurd for Party-Malice and Passion, to suggest or to receive? It is time for us, one would think, to be asham'd of this Pretence; which for thirty Years past, even ever since the time that we had reason to think our selves most secure, has, been made the Tool of artful Men to work their own Ambitious Designs, and which they themselves, how easy soever they find it to impose upon others, can't but know to be the Contrivance of Malice and Revenge.

I shall beg leave upon this Occasion to quote a Passage from a *Prelate* of our Church of great Eminence and Experience, from a Sermon he preach'd about seven Years ago, in the time of the late gracious Queen, when the same Cry of the Church's danger was as great as it is now; for even, her Zeal and Piety could not prevent this Jealousy. *I have been now, says he, these twenty two Years in a Station and Circumstances that has let me into the Councils and Designs of that sort of Men on whom these Suspicions are fasten'd; and I do solemnly, as in the*

the Presence of God, declare, and appeal to him who knows all Things, and knows that I Lye not, when I say, that I never heard or knew of any Designs against the Church, but much to the contrary: And that all the Favour shou'd to Dissenters was onely from the Principles of Humanity, Charity and good Policy, without any design to Exalt them, or to depress, much less to destroy the Church; but on the contrary to dispose them by the wisest and best Methods that could be thought on, to unite with the Church, that so we may be one Body firmly compacted together. This I say once for all, He that will receive it, says he, let him receive it. Thus far this great and learned Man, and if he was now to speak, I don't doubt but he might make the same Declaration. There has been nothing at all done since that time against the Church; We have the same and further Laws for it's Security; and we have a Prince upon the Throne who has given all the Assurances that Words can express; who has done all that we could desire of him for the good of the Church, and not one Thing that can be suspected of any other Design.

And now I have laid before you the Happiness we enjoy in order to engage our Love and Affection to our Country, and endeavour'd to take off those unreasonable Jealousies that tend so much to the Diminution of it.

I shall in the next Place venture to turn your Thoughts from imaginary to real Danger, in order to animate our heartiest Zeal in our Countries service.

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It is but too well known how much these unreasonable Clamours and Complaints have weaken'd us ; What Mischief these unnatural Strivings among us have done to the common Interest of our Country. It is from hence that one Rebellion has been actually rais'd among us ; and tho' by the good Providence of God, it was timely suppress'd, yet the same evil Spirit has moved the Waters again, and given us fresh Apprehensions of Danger from a foreign Invasion ; and all in favour of the same Cause, to overturn our present happy Constitution ; to change our Religion for Popery, and our Liberties for Slavery. 'Tis Madness to hope for better from a *Popish Prince*, and from an endless Succession of *Papists* upon the Throne ; which is the necessary Consequence of this wild Scheme : And indeed it is one of the worst Circumstances of our Danger, that so many unwary Men should sooth themselves up with other Notions, and flatter themselves so far as to imagine it likely that ever our Religion or our Liberties should subsist under a *Popish* Government : 'Tis what they never did yet, either in this or in any other Nation in the World.

Our Enemies have already given us to understand what we are to expect from them ; I do not mean the *Papists*, Their constant Behaviour toward *Protestants*, wherever they have Power, puts it out of all doubt what Usage we must have from them ; but we have other Enemies who shew themselves too much of the same Spirit ; I mean the *Nonjurors*, who call themselves

hemselves *Protestants*, and assume to themselves the Name of the onely true *Churchmen*; who declare it to be their settled Principle that we have had no *Church* among us for these thirty Years past; that all those who have frequented our Communion, are no better than *Schismaticks* and *Heriticks*.

This is what they have openly asserted in Print; and it is what we have reason to believe is the avow'd Opinion, not of one or two rash Men only, but of their whole Body. So that according to this Doctrine, all of us who have submitted to the *Government* for these three last Reigns, not excepting that of our late Queen, have been all this while out of the *Pale of the Church*, and in a State of *Damnation*. Let the *Church of Rome* pronounce a severer Sentence if they can! And let those among us who are concern'd in this heavy Charge, as every one here present must be, every one that comes to our Churches and joins in our Prayers and in Communion with us; let them, I say, judge from hence what it is they are doing, while they assist in carrying on the Designs of these Men, that is, in serving the Interest of the *Pretender*.

What a shocking Thought is it, and how full of Horror! that the whole Body of our Nation should be thus Condemned by Wholesale; both King and People; Clergy and Laity; both our Fathers, our selves, and our Posterity too if they persist in the same way; and that by our fellow *Protestants*, and Brethren,
whose

whose Misfortune in not being able to comply with the Government, we have always been forward to Pity, and many among us to Assist; whom, we have been always ready to treat with Compassion, as honest, tho' deceiv'd Men; and whom we could little suspect of Entertaining such hard Notions of us, who profess the same Faith, and the same Religion with themselves, and agree in every Point but onely in this; that we think it our Duty to submit to the Government, which God has plac'd us under, and to Communicate with such Bishops and Pastors as in his Providence he has set over us.

How must our Enemies triumph to see the Church of England thus treated by it's pretended Friends and Sons! but blessed be God; These severe Judges have not Power to Execute their cruel Sentence; and I hope every sincere Protestant must detest such uncharitable Principles, which tend to confine the Church of England to such narrow Bounds, even to a few, to a very few, who since the Revolution have separated themselves from our Congregations, only because they could not Communicate with any that had submitted to the Government; nor join in Prayers for our Kings and Queens that have so happily fill'd the Throne since that time.

From hence I say, we may judge what we are to expect, if ever the Wishes and Endeavours of these Men should prevail; When our Protestant Brethren threaten us so hard,
what

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what can we hope for from others? And is it not time for us yet to see our Danger? Shall we go on still in working our own Ruin?

But if People will not see the Mischiefs threaten'd from a Popish Prince; If notwithstanding all past and present Experience, they will still flatter themselves with other Hopes; if they can desire to see our present *King* dethron'd and the *Pretender* plac'd in his room; If they can be content to put their *Religion* and their *Liberties* to such a Venture; yet let me suggest one thing more to the Consideration of such Men: Can they wish to see our Nation the Scene of such a Dispute? Can they imagine that such a Controversy can be decided in their Favour without the extremest Misery to our Land? Is it possible for them to hope that a King surrounded with a *Loyal and unanimous Parliament*, and with so great a Number of *faithful Subjects*, and supported with such *powerful Alliances* abroad can be easily conquer'd? No; as wretched a People as we are represented to be by our Enemies, I doubt not but that they will find themselves mistaken in their Account; and, I am verily persuaded, if God should suffer us to come under such a Tryal, there are true *Englishmen* still among us, and great Numbers too, far greater than they are made to believe; who will venture their Lives, even to the last drop of their Blood, in Defence of so good a Cause; rather than submit to him who is the Pretender to the Crown, or to any other

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other Power whatever, that shall be so Vain as to Attempt it.

The Advantages of our Country are too great, and too much valued by all considerate Men to be easily given up; and I can't doubt but, that when once such a Danger appears in Earnest; many among us, even of those who are now so unhappily deluded must recover their Senses, and exert themselves in their Country's defence. And what can be the Consequence of such a Contention, but to see our Land fill'd with Foreign Armies, and our envy'd Nation become a Scene of Blood and Desolation? It is what other Nations have been used to, but 'tis what we, blessed be God, are not yet acquainted with, to have our Cities and our Towns burnt to Ashes, our Houses plunder'd, and our Estates and Lives expos'd to the Ravage and Fury of rapacious and merciless Men.

Are there such Wretches among us as can give Encouragement to such an Enterprize? Can the *Papists* themselves wish to see their native Country involved in so much Misery and Confusion?

Far be it from my Intention to amuse you or my self with any frightful Apprehensions of Danger; blessed be God, our Enemies are not so Formidable as to give us much Reason for it.

God indeed is able to work our Ruin by the most unlikely Means, and we can't tell how far our Sins and our base Unthankfulness and Insensibility of the Mercies we enjoy, may provoke

vöke him to be our Enemy ; but I trust for his Name's sake, and for the sake of that holy Religion that is profess'd among us, he will yet show Mercy to us ; And his Providence has hitherto been so remarkable in our Favour, that it would be a blameable Distrust in us, to doubt his Goodness. However the Consideration of the Danger that we are threaten'd with, should serve at least to awaken us all, to give us a just Detestation of such Wretches who are labouring to bring so much Misery upon us, and to put us upon such Methods as may be most Conducive to the lasting Prosperity of our Country.

What these are is the thing I propos'd in the last Place to lay before you ; But I must not presume so far upon your Patience as to enlarge upon this Head ; give me leave to propose two or three Things only that our present Circumstances seem more earnestly to require.

And first, One necessary Expedient of our Happiness and what we very much feel the want of, is, a due Submission in all Ranks and Orders of Men, to our Governours, whether it be to the King as Supreme, or to those that are put in Authority under him : For true Christian Loyalty consists in both, and we can't be good Subjects to the King, while we take upon us to revile his Ministers, and those that are employ'd under him in the Administration of publick Affairs. 'Tis no Secret how much this Humour prevails among us, and what an

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unkindly Influence it has upon the publick Good, we have but too sensible Experience.

Solomon observes that *Oppression will make a wise Man mad*; Humane Nature will be apt to complain under Hardships, from what Hands soever they come; and if this were our Case at present, it might be proper for me to show how far our Religion restrains us under such Circumstances. But notwithstanding all the restless Endeavours of Malice and Revenge, I may leave it to the Conscience of every particular Man among us, whether in his own Case, he can say, that he has Cause of Complaint against the Government.

Whose Liberty has been invaded? Or whose Property has been injur'd? Of who is there that has suffer'd in any Respect but as an Evil-Doer? Let Men but be impartial and they will find as little Reason for Discontent as under the Government of any Prince that ever sat upon the *English* Throne.

Particular Grievances there may be, and so there always were, and ever will be, while Government is in the Hands of fallible Men.

But the general Pretence of all the Complaint we hear of is for the publick Good; the Danger of our happy Constitution is the common Cry; the Apprehensions of this, they would make us believe, is what they have at Heart, and are so much concern'd about; I wish their other Behaviour was such as would give one any Reason to believe them in Earnest in this Pretence, the Methods I am sure made
use

use of by these Men are very unlikely to prevent such an Evil ; I pray God, they may not bring it upon us ; It is, I am persuaded, the chief Danger we have to fear : But to this I have spoken already, and shall only add, that it is a most unchristian Behaviour toward our Superiors, to charge such Designs upon them without very good Grounds ; a most injurious Treatment of a Government to condemn it upon Suspicion of intending so much Mischief, without one Step made towards it, and amidst the most solemn Assurances, and the best Security that can be given to the contrary.

Such Behaviour to private Men is Unjustifiable and Unchristian, but to the Government and to our Superiors 'tis intolerable Rudeness and Insolence ; and whatever ill Returns we the *Ministers of the Gospel*, may meet with for our Pains ; we cannot do our Duty to God, to our *King*, or to our *Country*, unless we do our Endeavour to Correct so vile a Practice ; a Practice so contrary to the Rules of Christianity, so inconsistent with that Submission and Respect that is due to Government, and so destructive of our Countries Peace and Welfare,

And since I am engag'd upon this Subject, I can't with Decency neglect pressing you to a loyal and dutiful Behaviour to the King, and to a sincere and hearty Affection to the Establishment of the Crown in a *Protestant* Line ; an Expedient so necessary to the good of our Country, that I am fully persuaded, the Se-

curity of all our Happiness does under God, entirely depend upon it; so that it is not more our Duty than it is our Interest. And it is very strange that a Right settled by so many Acts of Parliament, and by the concurrent Voice of the whole Nation; A Right founded upon so much Reason; as the only Security of our Religion and all our Liberties; A Right that has for so many Years been acquiesc'd in by all Orders and Degrees of Men amongst us; and justify'd by the whole Body of our Judges and other learned Men of that Profession, who are best qualify'd to know our Constitution; And a Right, which God himself, I speak with Reverence to his secret Councils, has seem'd to approve by so many signal Instances of his Blessing. It is strange, I say, that any should be found among us to call in Question such a Right as that of our present Government.

But it is yet more strange and lamentable that so many who have acknowledg'd this Right; who have for so many Years submitted and sworn to it; not only in the time of our late Queen, but even in this present Reign; and who have solemnly abjur'd the Pretender, That any such Men should still talk of another Right, is such a horrid Piece of Hypocrisy, so notorious a Breach of Honour and Conscience, and the most sacred Ties of Oaths, as is not to be mention'd without a brand of Infamy; And yet such Men we have seen; even Triumphant in their Guilt, and setting up for honest

nest and brave Men; Good God! Whither will our Delusions carry us?

If we do believe in our Conscience the present Settlement of the Crown to be Unlawful and Unjustifiable, it is no doubt the Part of an honest Man and of a good Christian to suffer any thing rather than to comply with it; but if we can Swear to it; if we can give the Government the Security of our Oaths, it is our Duty to act accordingly, to do all we can to Support and Maintain it; and not to do so, what Evasions soever Men may frame for their Excuse, is no better than Perjury.

Some Men are forward enough in clamouring against others as mercenary Men, and Time-Servers; but who they are that deserve this vile Character; whether they that swear to the Government, and think themselves oblig'd by their Oaths to Act and to Talk for it's Interest; or they who take the Oaths, and at the same time in all their Conversation and Actions show that they do it against their Judgment and their Conscience, and only to serve some temporal Interest; let the World judge.

I cannot forbear pressing this Matter to let Men see, how much it is the Interest of all; and how much it is the Duty of those who have taken the Oaths to the Government to Act for it, and to endeavour by all Means that are within their Power to Support and Maintain it: I am sorry there should be any Occasion
for

for such an Admonition; *He that hath Ears to hear let him hear,*

But 2dly, I should put you in Mind, how needful to our Countries Happines, it is, for us all to Unite among our selves; and I would to God I could with any Hopes of Success, press a Union in God's Service; that our *Jerusalem, which is built as a City that is at Unity within it self*; that is, our Church which is establish'd with so much Order and Decency, might be the Center of Unity among Protestants, whither all the Tribes might go up to give Thanks to the Name of the Lord; that we might all walk together into the House of God as Friends. This would be a great Addition to our Happines and Security; but if we are not to be so happy; let us at least Unite against our common Adversary.

It is high Time for us to forget our former Distinctions and Quarrels, when the Enemy is at our Gates.

What an infatuated People must we be, to persist in our Enmity against one another, upon such little and trifling Occasions, when we have a common Danger in our View, when our Religion and our All is at Stake.

How must the Nations round about us stand amaz'd at our Folly? How must our Enemies rejoyce, and our Friends lament and pity our Infatuation? How will our Posterity blame us; when they shall hear and read of the Priviledges which *Englishmen* once enjoy'd?

But whither am I carryed? It is too uneasy a Thought to insist upon; and I hope still

still that we shall be Wiser; and that our Happiness may yet be transmitted to our latest Posterity; to this End

I shall add but one Thing more, which is indeed the Sum of all, and which alone would cure all our Evils, and be our most effectual Security; and that is, That we would be truly and sincerely Religious; This would teach us *Loyalty* and *Submission* to our Governors, and *Love* and *Charity* among our selves. In truth, It is for want of a true Sense of *Religion* that we see so much Hatred and Contention about it; and by this Means we could not fail of God's Protection, which is the only real Security, the only infallible Support in all Events.

Righteousness, says the Wise Man, *exalteth a Nation*, but *Sin* is the *Reproach* and the Ruin of any People; and here it might be useful enough to set before our Eyes what Examples we have of God's Vengeance against a sinful People. This was remarkable in the Destruction of other great and once flourishing Monarchies of the World, as well as that of *Rome*, which I mention'd in the beginning of this Discourse; whose Power declin'd with their Vertue, and whose Downfal was the visible Punishment of God for their Sins; and this was the Case of *Jerusalem* whose Glory is here describ'd in this *Psalms*; which after it had been the Care and peculiar Concern of God, and the Glory of the whole Earth; was at last, by God's just Judgment, permitted to fall a Sacrifice to the Rage of their Enemies, and to become a Proverb of Reproach

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Reproach and Infamy to the whole World. And it is observ'd by their Historians; that among their other Sins, God gave them up to the most unnatural Dissentions and Quarrels among themselves, which did them more Mischief than their Enemies did, and hasten'd and increas'd their Destruction. A proper warning to all; to hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously.

In a Word then, for the Sake of our Country, for our Brethren and Companions sake, for the Sake of our holy Religion, and for the Security of our Happiness both in this World and hereafter, let us fear God and keep his Commandments, and then it shall be well with us and with our Children for ever. Then may we with Confidence put our trust in God, and we shall be safe under the Shadow of his Wings from all our Enemies. And now let me incite you in the Words of our Royal Author, O pray for the Peace of Jerusalem; Let us all with united Heart and Voice join our sincere and earnest Wishes for our Country's Prosperity, in the Psalmist's Language, Peace be within thy Walls and Plenty of Peace within thy Palaces. Amen.

F. I. N. I. S.

